

Kentucky Teacher

May 2007

News for the Nation's Most Innovative Educators

Steve Stubbs
Newport (Independent) High School
7 years in the classroom



www.education.ky.gov



Photo by Tim Thornberry, Education Cabinet

Finding the right mixture for success

Vanessa McClelland, a senior at Caldwell County High School, gets hands-on experience making yeast bread dough during a Commercial Baking Competition held at Sullivan University in Louisville. A culinary arts class member at the Caldwell County Area Technology Center, Vanessa was among other Kentucky SkillsUSA members who participated in job skills competitions during the student organization's annual conference this spring.

2007 education legislation becomes law on June 25

Kentucky legislators ended the 2007 legislative session on March 27 without resolving money problems in the retirement systems for state and local government employees and public school teachers. The 2007 General Assembly lasted only 30 days.

During that time, however, several education-related bills were passed. Gov. Ernie Fletcher has signed these bills into law, and they become effective June 25. Each summarized bill is listed by number as a House Bill (HB), House Committee Resolution (HCR), Senate Bill (SB) or Senate Resolution (SR). For the full text of any law, go to the Leg-

islative Research Commission's Web site at www.lrc.ky.gov/record/07RS/record.htm.

Students

Student's license or permit to operate a motor vehicle: Deletes the requirement that a local school district operate an alternative education program prior to the revocation of a student's operator's license, intermediate license or instruction permit. Requires that the application of any minor under the age of 18 for a license or permit include parental consent for the release of academic and attendance information required under KRS 159.051. Reinstates the law allowing for the suspension of a student's driver's license or permit if the student drops out of school, has nine or more unexcused absences in the preceding semester or is academically deficient, which is defined as not receiving passing grades in at least four courses, or the equivalent of four courses, in the preceding semester. (HB 32)

Student attendance: Establishes that the attendance record of a student is cumulative during a school year. Requires that when a student transfers to a new school, his or her attendance records from the previous school shall be used in the determination of the student's status as a truant. Requires the Kentucky Department of Education to assure that the student information system facilitates the collection of student data and

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"progressing but declining" category, and nearly 4 percent of schools were in assistance.

Projected 2014 performance for all schools with stable data indicates 37 percent of schools will be meeting the state goal. Approximately 50 percent will be in the progressing category, and 13 percent of schools will be in assistance.

"I don't believe we've changed the culture," said board member Joe Brothers. "More of the same is not working. We need to change course to address this issue effectively."

Department staff and board members agreed to continue the discussion at the board's May retreat and the regular June meeting. Intervention strategies for low-performing schools and additional needed supports will be reviewed at those meetings.

See BOARD on Page 10

Free online professional development offered to Kentucky educators

By Cathy Lindsey

cathy.lindsey@education.ky.gov

What if you suspect one of your students is the victim of child abuse or sexual assault? Would you know what to do – what your professional obligations entail – what your legal responsibilities require?

The Kentucky Department of Education now offers a free, interactive online professional development course addressing awareness and intervention strategies dealing with sexual assault, domestic violence and child abuse situations. This is the first online course of its kind concerning these issues for educators and adults who work with school children.

"Educators and paraprofessionals have daily contact with students," said Mary Jo Rist, a department consultant with the Division of Secondary and Virtual Learning. "It is very important that they under-

stand their basic rights and responsibilities under the law, while making appropriate interventions with children who may be in at-risk situations."

The course, "Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence and Child Abuse: Awareness and Intervention," covers different types of abuse, the psychology and stages of abuse, laws pertaining to abuse, the educator's role and the process of reporting suspected abuse. Participants also will discover a number of resources that are available to victims and their families.

The seven-week course is offered free of charge to Kentucky public school educators and paraprofessionals through the Kentucky Virtual High School (KVHS). Participants can access the curriculum 24 hours a day, seven days a week from any computer

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Bulletin Board



Photo by Tim Thornberry/Education Cabinet

Camargo Elementary (Montgomery County)

Bulletin Board is compiled by Rebecca Blessing
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Conferences

School administrators

"Extreme Commitment: Passionate Leadership" is the theme of the 38th annual Kentucky Association of School Administrators Conference July 18-20 in Louisville. Register online until July 13.

www.kasa.org/Conference07.htm

Educating at-risk students

The 6th annual Alternative Strategies for Educating Students At-Risk Conference hosted by the Kentucky Educational Collaborative for State Agency Children (KECSAC) is scheduled for July 24-26 at Eastern Kentucky University in Richmond. Participants will earn 18 Effective Instructional Leadership Act (EILA) hours.

Contact: Ronnie Nolan, (859) 622-6552.

www.kecsac.eku.edu

Psychology in schools

The Kentucky Association for Psychology in the Schools (KAPS) Fall Conference is scheduled Sept. 19-21 at the Radisson Plaza in Lexington. The conference theme is "30 Years in History: Influencing Progress for the Future." Call for presentation applications are due by June 15.

www.psychology.eku.edu/kaps

Literacy for All

The Kentucky Reading Association will hold its annual conference Sept. 20-22 in Lexington. The theme is "Literacy for All." The deadline for submitting proposals to present at the conference is May 31.

Contact: Tiffany Wheeler, (859) 233-8186, twheeler@transy.edu.

www.kyreading.org

National dropout prevention

The 19th Annual National Dropout Prevention Network Conference will be held in Louisville Oct. 27-31. Sessions will focus on the most current strategies, programs and research to reduce dropout rates and increase graduation rates. Early bird registration runs until June 29.

www.dropoutprevention.org/conference/default.htm

SETESOL 2007

The Southeastern Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (SETESOL) is soliciting proposals for presenters at its 2007 conference in Louisville Nov. 29-Dec. 1. The theme of the conference is "Building Bridges: Connecting the Learning Community." Proposals are due by June 30.

www.kytesol.org/conferences.htm

KASC call for presenters

The Kentucky Association of School Councils has issued a call for presenters for its annual conference Oct. 9-10 in Louisville. The conference theme is "Inspiring Excellence, One Student at a Time."

Contact: KASC office, (859) 238-2188, kasc@kasc.net

www.kasc.net

Events

AP Summer Institute

Morehead State University is offering a weeklong Advanced Placement Summer Institute in 20 subjects for teachers to enhance and develop their skills in AP instruction, July 9-13. Registration and non-refundable deposit are due by June 15.

www.moreheadstate.edu/oce/index.aspx?id=2908

Behavior Institute 2007

Registration is under way for Behavior Institute 2007, June 25-27 in Lexington. The institute is designed for all educators who work with children with challenging behaviors and those who desire to create school climates that foster learning and success for every student. Registration is first-come, first-served.

www.state.ky.us/agencies/behave/misc/bi01.html

Science teacher summer getaway

The Kentucky Science Teachers Association's summer getaway is June 23 at Maywoods Environmental and Education Laboratory managed by Eastern Kentucky University. Participants will learn the practical application of classroom-friendly technology in an outdoor setting.

Registration deadline is May 25.

www.naturalareas.eku.edu/currentevents/default.php

Lights! Camera! Action!

A one-day seminar on school video-multimedia production equipment and teaching methods will be held at KET in Lexington from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on July 17 and 18. The \$50 registration fee includes lunch and refreshments. Register online for one day only.

www.ket.org/education/video-mm-event-infopage07.htm

Summer economics extravaganza

A two-day economic education workshop will be held from 8 a.m.-4 p.m. July 17-19 at Eastern Kentucky University's Model Laboratory School. K-12 teachers will receive free curricula and other materials and learn how to use games and activities to introduce economics in the classroom.

www.win.net/~econky/pd/professionaldevelopment.html

English Language Learners Academies in four regions

Four regional English Language Learners Academies (ELLA) will be held for instructional teams across the state starting in August. These professional development academies will feature strategies to reduce barriers as well as best practices and research-based methods for teaching English language learners. Each academy will be held on four Saturdays (August-December) at one of four sites: Alexandria, Berea, Bowling Green and Shelbyville. Applications are due June 1.

Contact: Maureen Keithley, (502) 564-2106, Ext. 4106, maureen.keithley@education.ky.gov

www.education.ky.gov/JumpTo/?jump=ELLAacademy

2007 Kentucky State Fair

The Kaleidoscope Discovery Zone at the 2007 Kentucky State Fair will feature "The Mosaic of Life: Why Biodiversity is Key to our Survival on Earth." Students will explore 20,000-square feet of exhibits in South Wing B and a full schedule of programs. Kentucky's biodiversity, along with the biodiversity of Africa, is the 2007 focus of the state fair's Project Global. The state fair is in Louisville Aug. 16-26.

www.kystatefair.org/special_exhibits/educational_exhibit/index.html

Resources

BA in elementary education

Midway College is offering an online Bachelor of Arts degree completion program in elementary education. Graduates will meet the requirements for certification to teach primary through 5th grade in Kentucky.

www.elearnportal.com/mdwc

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Commissioner's Comments

Instruction is the key to success

By Kevin Noland

Interim Commissioner of Education

This spring I've been fielding questions about what the recent changes in the Commonwealth Accountability Testing System (CATS) will mean to school accountability indices in the fall. We can speculate that results may be affected by the changes, but the bottom line is that we don't have data – and can't yet predict – whether the changes will impact CATS results this school year.

The 2007 Kentucky Core Content Tests were just administered in April. We won't begin working with the data until after the tests have been scored in June and standard setting is completed in July.

Many of the changes in CATS were instituted with the spring 2007 assessments and will be part of the 2008 state assessment. However, several changes from the recent CATS redesign for 2007-08 will not be determined until later this summer after the proper legislative committees have reviewed the regulation changes.

In addition, the testing window during which 11th graders will take the ACT has not been set, and conversations are still occurring about a norm-referenced test for elementary grades. We don't know for certain how these changes will affect next year's testing results either. But I want to share with you what we do know.

Kentucky teachers have always been partners in the development of CATS. Since 1998, they have helped align and realign curriculum documents and test blueprints to changing state and national standards. Most recently, thousands of teachers reviewed and commented on "The Program of Studies – Revised 2006" and the "Ken-

tucky Core Content for Assessment 4.1."

However, this atmosphere of change has raised new questions about how our state assessment and accountability system works. To communicate the changes made to CATS, we've included in this issue of *Kentucky Teacher* a special pullout section that discusses "What educators need to know about testing in 2007-08."

Pages 5-8 include information in text and chart form to help educators learn more about testing in Kentucky – what content is tested at which grades, when tests will occur and how much weight content areas, writing portfolios and nonacademic data have in a school's accountability index. There also are overviews of the new fall tests (EXPLORE and PLAN) as well as Work Keys, ACT and alternate assessments.

In addition, the special section focuses on the foundation of learning – good instruction and how to make it happen, how to use best practices and how teachers can move every student to higher levels of learning. There's advice from district assessment coordinators and teachers in schools in the Johnson County and Barren County school districts. They talk about how focusing on instruction – rather than assessment – helps their students perform at higher levels.

We've provided Web links to important curriculum documents and materials. Teachers can use these resources to make

stronger connections between instruction and assessment in content areas and with writing.

My hope is that this special section will be a source of reference to educators who have questions about CATS during the coming school year. Now is the time for all the questions about instruction and assessment to be clarified!

Only seven school years stand between today and the 2014 state goal of proficiency for every school and district and the 2014 federal goal of proficiency for every child. Many of our schools are feeling a sense of urgency!

A recent report from Kentucky Department of Education staff shows that 51 percent of our public schools

are meeting their accountability goals under CATS. The report also says that based on past test data only 37 percent of our schools are currently on target to reach the state's goal of proficiency and beyond by 2014.

The job of our public schools is to set high standards for student learning and to provide Kentucky children with opportunities to meet those standards and learn the skills they need to be successful in postsecondary studies and the work place.

We see this occurring throughout the state. We know it happens in schools rich with resources, and we know it happens in schools where students face barriers to learning every day.

It's about teaching children what they need to know and be able to do to be competitive in the 21st century work place. If our schools are doing that – and doing it well – students will perform at high levels on assessments, no matter what changes are made to the system.

Reflections at the end

As this issue of *Kentucky Teacher* is being completed and printed, the Kentucky Board of Education is interviewing and making decisions on the appointment of the next commissioner of education to lead this state. By the time you receive your next issue in August, a new commissioner will be leading our schools into the 2007-08 school year.

The past seven months I have served as interim commissioner have been interesting. I've traveled a lot more than with my "regular" job and been able to renew old acquaintances and make many new ones.

I'd like to express my gratitude to all those who have helped make the transition time between commissioners a time of continuous progress. I have enjoyed working in this new capacity with the state board, the department staff, leaders in our public schools and districts and the many Kentuckians who serve on the commissioner's advisory panels.

However, I'm ready to return to my work as general counsel for the Department of Education and deputy commissioner of the Bureau of Operations and Support Services. If the work of the state board goes as expected, I should be able to pass the baton to Kentucky's fourth commissioner of education on July 1 so that the new commissioner can lead Kentucky's public schools toward our goal of proficiency and beyond by 2014.

(To comment on this topic, contact Interim Commissioner Noland at kevin.noland@education.ky.gov.)

Erwin identified as commissioner of education

Barbara Erwin was identified as the leading candidate for the position of Kentucky Commissioner of Education by the Kentucky Board of Education following a meeting on April 24. The announcement came as the May issue of *Kentucky Teacher* was going to press. The August issue will contain more information about the final selection.

Erwin has served as superintendent of Community Unit District 303 in St. Charles, Ill., since 2004. During her tenure, Erwin created a data warehouse and related training; increased student achievement through a comprehensive, continuous school improvement model using the SMART goals; and managed moderate growth in the district of 15,000 students.

Prior to that, she was superintendent of the 30,000-student Scottsdale, Ariz., Unified School District, the Allen, Texas, Independent School District and the Tipton, Ind., Community School Corp. She was named Texas Superintendent of the Year in 1997 and 1998.

Erwin was an adjunct professor at Texas Women's University. Her classroom experience includes teaching students with disabilities at the junior high level and serving as a resource diagnostician for special needs students. She was a Title IV consultant and an elementary school principal.

She did her undergraduate work in special education at Indiana University and received a master's in school administration from Purdue University and a doctorate in school administration from Indiana University. She has pursued post-doctoral work at Columbia University and the University of Southern California.

She and her husband, David, currently reside in St. Charles, Ill., and have two grown sons, Will and Jon.



Chinese teaching and learning

Jane Zhao, Chinese language teacher in the Boone County School District, asks questions of students in her Chinese class at Larry A. Ryle High School. Zhao, a national-award-winning high school geography teacher in China, also teaches language classes at Gray Middle School and is in her second year of teaching an online Mandarin Chinese class she developed for the Kentucky Virtual High School while employed at the Kentucky Department of Education.

Photo by Tim Thornberry, Education Cabinet

Arts across the curriculum is added to annual Faubush seminar

The Kentucky Arts Council's (KAC) annual Design Your Own Professional Development seminar will have a slightly different twist this summer with new workshops designed to help teachers integrate the arts across the curriculum. The event takes place July 17-19 at the Kentucky Leadership Center near Faubush (Pulaski County).

Social studies teacher Kim Bridges attended last year as part of a teaching team from Georgetown Middle School (Scott County). "Many of the activities that we experienced at Faubush have been incorporated into our classes," she reports. "I really enjoyed all the classes I had and feel as if I learned a lot about the arts in general."

As in the past three years, educators and parents again can

select from a variety of hands-on workshops led by professional artists from the KAC Arts Education Roster. Many workshops will focus on the connection between the arts and cultural studies.

This year, a new strand of workshops will help participants explore how the arts can reinforce concepts in social studies, mathematics, practical living and language arts. There also will be a focus on combining arts disciplines.

For example, Hong Shao will lead participants in understanding the history, culture and geography of China through music and dance from different regions and different Chinese minority groups. Darla Jackson will demonstrate how music and dance from her Cherokee heritage can be integrated into the study of

Kentucky and U.S. history.

Roberta Schultz will lead a workshop in writing and performing two medieval music genres: the chant and the folk ballad. She will emphasize how to integrate these forms with social studies and language arts. Artist Pat Banks will lead activities in manuscript illumination from the same period, combining visual and language arts.

Jane McTeigue and Sarah Paulson will present a workshop on the music, poetry and visual arts of the Harlem Renaissance. Dianne Simpson will demonstrate how to link basket making to mathematics, economics and history. Tamara Loewenthal and Jamie Gans' workshop integrates mathematics, history and physical education with traditional music and dance.

Each session also will include suggested writing activities and a discussion of the relevant core content, depth of knowledge levels and open-response questions. All workshop presenters have received training and had hands-on classroom experience in implementing the new arts and humanities core content and revised Program of Studies.

The two-and-a-half-day event will benefit educators in any content area, as well as special education teachers, family resource and youth service center directors, and parents. Participants will receive 12 to 16 hours of professional development credit by attending plenary sessions and four breakout workshops of their own choosing.

The \$240 registration fee

per participant includes lodging, meals, snacks and resource materials. (Discounts are available for commuting teachers.) When teaching team members enroll together, the second teacher (and any subsequent teachers) gets a \$10 discount. Optional evening activities include nature walks, a bonfire on the shores of Lake Cumberland and entertainment by some of Kentucky's finest artists.

Links to information and online registration are on the KAC Web site. Space is limited. Registration closes June 1.

MORE INFO ...

www.artscouncil.ky.gov - links from homepage and "Arts Education"

Kentucky Folklife Festival is Sept. 20-22 in Frankfort

More than 150 artists and demonstrators will share their piece of Kentucky's story through music, dance, crafts, food, games and other expressions of the state's diverse cultural heritage Sept. 20-22 in Frankfort during the Kentucky Folklife Festival.

The event is recognized by teachers throughout the state as a way to introduce students to a variety of Kentucky's living traditions through hands-on learning aligned to core content. Teachers can make arrangements for field trips now by calling (502) 564-1982 or sending an e-mail to KHStours@ky.gov.

Activities have been planned to acquaint students with cultural traditions, stringed-instrument makers, immigrants and agriculture. This year's festival also will include a professional development seminar for educators.

Students from Kentucky State University, the state's only historically black postsecondary institution, will teach visitors about African-American homecoming traditions – from parade float building to step dancing.

Visitors will experience the art of lutherie from Kentucky's master stringed-instrument builders and repair specialists.

A commemorative exhibit at the Center for Kentucky History, also in downtown Frankfort, will spotlight the lifetime accomplishments of luthier Homer Ledford, who

made more than 6,000 dulcimers and numerous mandolins, fiddles, guitars and ukuleles during his life.

Students can share the food, music and dance of families – new and old – that have immigrated to Kentucky. The Center for Kentucky History also offers an exhibit titled, "Our New Kentucky Home: Immigrant Experiences."

Activities at the Kentucky Riverview Park will feature the changing world of agriculture in Kentucky. Students also can learn about recreational folklife including south central Kentucky marble traditions.

The professional development seminar is designed for educators who want to enhance their background understanding of folk arts, discover resources for including folk arts in the curriculum and learn classroom-ready activities to begin integrating folk arts into arts and humanities, social studies and across the



Kentucky State University students teach some movements in African-American step dancing to students during the 2005 Kentucky Folklife Festival.

Photo submitted by the Kentucky Historical Society

Thinkfinity.org offers thousands of resources

Fifty thousand standards-based, P-12 lesson plans, resources for adult and family literacy providers, and other education resources are now just a click away online at thinkfinity.org. The Verizon Foundation is spending \$31 million over the next three years to provide these free online educational resources to teachers, students, parents and community organizations focused on increasing literacy and learning.

Some of the nation's leading educational organizations have written and produced the teacher resources, professional development and literacy skills materials posted on the Web site. Among those contributing to the site are the National Center for Family Literacy, ProLiteracy Worldwide,

National Geographic Expeditions, ArtsEdge, EconEdLink, EdSiteMen, National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, Read-Write-Think and Science NetLinks.

These and other educational organizations will continue to produce and expand the number of interactives and other educational resources.

MORE INFO ...

www.thinkfinity.org

What teachers need to know about instruction and assessment

This special Kentucky Teacher section contains information about 2007-08 testing dates and the Kentucky Core Content Tests (KCCT), how the changes to the Commonwealth Accountability Testing System (CATS) will be used in computing school accountability results and descriptions about the new test components required by Senate Bill 130.

Two pages are devoted to practical information that classroom teachers need to know about providing instruction that will move students to higher academic achievement. Comments from district assessment coordinators and teachers in Barren County and Johnson County school districts emphasize the importance of good instruction throughout the school year – not just scrimmages and prep tests in weeks prior to the testing windows – to move students to proficiency and beyond.

Enhanced CATS helps measure progress for state and federal accountability

Simply put, an assessment and accountability system is a way to measure the progress schools are making in educating students. It also is a way to hold educators accountable for that progress. However, there is a lot that goes into creating and maintaining an assessment and accountability system to keep it a valid and reliable measure of progress: occasional alignment to state, national and international standards, as well as updates to comply with state and federal education laws.

CATS and NCLB

A force behind recent changes to CATS has been Kentucky's compliance with the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001, which requires annual testing of students in grade 3 (existing pri-

mary) through grade 8 in reading and mathematics. Because Kentucky public school students in those grades were not tested each year in reading and mathematics, new tests had to be developed and field tested.

The tests needed to be designed to measure student performance for CATS accountability as well as provide data for the NCLB calculation of Adequate Yearly Progress.

Aligning content to standards

Developing these new tests meant aligning the work to the latest content standards. And, if Kentucky was going to align mathematics and reading content, it made sense also to look closely at standards in all content areas.

CATS TESTING CALENDAR FOR 2007-2008

GRADE	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MARCH	APRIL	MAY
3									KCCT ↗	↗
4									KCCT & Writing Portfolio Scoring ↗	↗
5									KCCT ↗	↗
6									KCCT ↗	↗
7									KCCT & Writing Portfolio Scoring ↗	↗
8		EXPLORE*							KCCT ↗	↗
9										
10		PLAN							KCCT ↗	↗
11									KCCT ↗	↗
12		On-demand writing							Writing Portfolio Scoring ↗	↗

Fall testing window is Sept. 17-28, 2007; spring testing window is April 21 - May 2, 2008.

* Not currently in accountability

Note: Dates will be determined soon for administration of the ACT and WorkKeys tests.

In January and February, all LEP students must take the English language proficiency test (ACCESS) to meet NCLB Title III requirements.

Teachers from throughout the state worked to revise the "Program of Studies for Kentucky Schools, Primary - 12" and Kentucky's "Core Content for Assessment."

New reporting deadlines, new tests

Enhancements to CATS also moved reporting deadlines so that schools and districts now receive

test results for both state and federal accountability earlier in the school year following assessment. In addition, requirements for writing portfolios were adjusted.

In the 2006 General Assembly, legislators passed Senate Bill (SB) 130 to require schools to administer a high school readiness exam (EXPLORE) in the 8th grade, a college readiness exam (PLAN) in the 10th grade and the ACT to 11th-grade students. The WorkKeys

assessment of work place skills for grades 10-12 is optional. PLAN and ACT results will factor into CATS accountability data. Inclusion of EXPLORE results in CATS accountability is under study at this time.

Components of the revised and enhanced CATS have been piloted during testing in spring and fall 2006. Most components come together for school accountability during the 2006-07 school year.

CATS Grade-Level Assessments								
Grade	Reading	Math	Science	Social Studies	Arts & Humanities	Practical Living / Vocational Studies	Writing	Norm-Referenced Tests
3	X	X						Districts selected and administered an NRT in 2006-07
4	X	X	X			X	Portfolio	
5	X	X		X	X		On-demand	
6	X	X						
7	X	X	X			X	Portfolio	
8	X	X		X	X		On-demand	
9								
10	X					X		
11		X	X	X	X			
12							On-demand Portfolio	WorkKeys**

* EXPLORE results are not currently included in accountability.

** WorkKeys job and work place skills assessment is optional in grades 10, 11 or 12 and will be included in nonacademic values.

*** ACT will first be administered and included in accountability in spring 2008.



Special section photos by Tim Thornberry, Education Cabinet



Instruction is the key to

Connections: Curriculum, instruction and assessment

One of the keys to successful teaching and learning is making a connection between curriculum, instruction and assessment.

Experienced educators say a methodical approach is the most effective way to make those connections. This includes an aligned standards-based curriculum, research-based best practices and differentiated instruction, varied assessments administered in a consistent classroom environment and ongoing student feedback.

Here are ideas for tailoring curriculum and instruction throughout the school year to meet the demands of state assessments:

- Use the "Program of Studies for Kentucky Schools, Primary - 12," not just the "Core Content for Assessment 4.1," as a basis for developing curriculum and units of study. The "Program of Studies" includes all the concepts, content and standards that should be taught to prepare students to meet the minimum requirements for high school graduation. The "Core Content for Assessment" identifies the content on which students may be tested.
- Use curriculum maps to pace instruction

during the school year to ensure you cover all the standards within your grade-level content. Curriculum maps can be aligned horizontally and vertically to organize content, skills, assessments and resources over time. By mapping what's actually taught and when, teachers produce data that can be used with assessment results to make modifications in instruction that help increase student learning.

- Develop units of study as a cohesive and intentional plan that will address content standards in a meaningful way.
- Include research-based best practices to individualize instruction for each student.
- Align classroom assessments to curriculum and base them on what is taught, not just what may appear on state tests.
- Use consistent test administration practices throughout the school year that conform to what is required for state testing.
- Provide students with ongoing feedback to promote better understanding of what they must learn or need to know.

Web links to many of these resources are found in the "Teaching Toolkit" on Page 7.

Writing assessment and writing instruction

While writing is not weighted as heavily as some other content areas in the overall CATS accountability formula, it seems to create the most anxiety for students and teachers alike.

Students are assessed in two types of writing:

- On-demand writing in grades 5, 8 and 12; students, independently and under specific time constraints, complete a sample of writing based on a prompt. Grade 12 students must complete two samples. Students in grades 5 and 8 also will respond to 12 multiple-choice questions on revising and editing skills.

Though writing is assessed in grades 4, 5, 7, 8 and 12, writing instruction should take place at all grade levels across all content areas throughout a student's school career. Writing instruction should relate to standards-based units of study so that it is relevant and promotes learning in the content area.

The "Kentucky Writing Handbook" provides information about other research-based practices for effective writing instruction. "The Kentucky Marker Papers (P-12)," which contains examples of student work, also provides good instructional guidelines. (See "Teaching Toolkit" for Web addresses.)

Writing Portfolio Requirements	
Grade 4 and 7* (3 selections)	Grade 12* (4 selections)
Reflective – focuses on the writer's growth through literacy development. Students may choose the most appropriate form.	Reflective – focuses on the writer's growth through literacy development. Students may choose the most appropriate form.
Personal Expressive – focuses on the significance of a relationship, one's own experiences and/or the experiences of others. Can include personal narratives or memoirs. Seventh grade can include personal essays. OR Literary – uses authentic literary forms to make meaning of the human condition. Can include short story, poem or script.	Personal Expressive – focuses on the significance of a relationship, one's own experiences and/or the experiences of others. Can include personal narratives, memoirs or personal essays. OR Literary – uses authentic literary forms to make meaning of the human condition. Can include short story, poem or script.
Transactive – focuses on "getting something done" in the real world such as: a letter to the editor, an editorial, an article, a speech or proposal.	Transactive – focuses on "getting something done" in the real world such as: a letter to the editor, an editorial, an article, a speech or proposal.
	Transactive with analytical or technical focus – focuses on a controlling idea that calls for analysis as a major form of idea development. Students also may choose to write technical pieces. Can include a variety of forms such as proposals, reports, scientific studies, manuals (in an authentic context) or letters.

* Seventh- and 12th-grade portfolios must include at least one piece from a content area other than English/language arts.

Depth of knowledge levels assigned to core content statements

"Core Content for Assessment 4.1" clarifies for educators, students and parents how students will be expected to demonstrate their knowledge on the state assessment. A depth of knowledge (DOK) level, from 1 to 4, is assigned after each content statement. This "code" denotes the DOK ceiling at which assessment items will be developed for the statement for state assessment purposes.

The DOK levels are descriptive — not a taxonomy — to illustrate how deeply a student has to know the content in order to respond to an item on the state assessment. DOK levels do not indicate level of difficulty and do not affect the weight of an item on CATS.

The DOK levels can best be explained with these examples:

Level 1 — The focus is on recalling and reproducing specific facts, definitions and details or on using routine procedures to explain.

Level 2 — The focus is on the basic application of skills and concepts; requires deeper knowledge than definition to explain how or why.

Level 3 — The focus is on strategic reasoning and planning in order to respond; requires complex and abstract thinking to draw conclusions and support reasoning.

Level 4 — The focus is on extended reason-

ing and thinking; requires complex reasoning, planning and thinking generally over periods of time for investigation or to complete the multiple steps of the assessment item. Because of the complexity of Level 4, it will most often be assessed at the classroom level and not on state assessments. The best assessment example of Level 4 DOK is Kentucky's writing portfolio where students complete their work over time.

Teachers should be aware that DOK for core content statements does not correspond to several other CATS components:

- DOK levels are not related to the points on a rubric scoring guide.
- DOK levels do not align with the four performance levels (novice, apprentice, proficient, distinguished).
- DOK levels do not necessarily correspond with the quadrants of the rigor and relevance framework.

The Department of Education has posted selected released items from previous Kentucky Core Content Tests on the Web that have been annotated to indicate what level of DOK the items address.

Released items for every content area and every assessed grade can be found by going to www.education.ky.gov and selecting "Core Content" in the left-hand menu. From that page, scroll down and click on "Released Items Annotated to the DOK."

What DACs are saying about ...

Making effective connections between instruction and assessment:

"It's 'all' about instruction. If instruction is tied to the 'Program of Studies' and 'Core Content for Assessment,' the assessment will take care of itself."

Benny Lile, Barren County district assessment coordinator (DAC)

"We tell our teachers to make learning 'real and meaningful' for students so when assessment takes place (in the spring) they can make a connection between what was taught and what they see on tests throughout the year."

Shauna Patton, Johnson County DAC

Providing professional development to help teachers make those connections:

"Professional development in instruction is ongoing throughout the year. It is based on the results of data analysis and the instructional needs of the schools."

Shauna Patton, Johnson County DAC

"Our training focuses on instructional methods and curriculum mapping and correlations with 'Core Content for Assessment' and 'Program of Studies.' We do little, if any, 'assessment-specific' training."

Benny Lile, Barren County DAC

'Teaching to the test':

"Our superintendent, Steve Trimble, tells teachers to teach every student as if he/she is their own child. Teach the core content, challenge students, make learning 'real and meaningful,' review continuously, teach to all learning styles – then as a result, high levels of learning will take place and then high test scores will follow."

Shauna Patton, Johnson County DAC

"I normally ask, 'If CATS went away tomorrow, would this topic and/or strategy be useful for our students?' If the answer is yes, we need to move forward. If the answer is no, we need to sit down and have some in-depth conversations about our practices."

Benny Lile, Barren County DAC

"We do not write because there is assessment, rather, we assess because we write and learn."

Kentucky Writing Handbook

O successful assessment

What teachers are saying about ...

Making effective connections between instruction and assessment:

"A useful idea that the Title I teacher and I have found is daily journal writing. Students share their writing, allowing us to provide feedback and other students to benefit from hearing changes that need to be made."

*Heather Butcher, 4th-grade language arts teacher,
Porter Elementary (Johnson County)*

"I assign fewer rote calculation problems and more 'word problems.' I make the 'word problems' count for more points to encourage students to put more effort into those problems ... I include hands-on activities frequently to deepen student understanding of abstract concepts."

*Jeanne Reed, mathematics teacher, grades 5 and 6,
Flat Gap Elementary (Johnson County)*

Strategies that help students feel comfortable about learning and assessment:

"One thing I could never stress enough is modeling. Students need numerous opportunities to gain insight on the thought processes behind problem solving. I always model each open-response question or mathematics problem first so they gain insight on how to approach the problem correctly ... I truly think students know the content, but are confused by the wording or directions for what the problem is asking of them. Pointing out key words and stressing their importance is another tool in use every day. I also try to make things as repetitious as possible and integrate with other content areas as much as possible."

*Jeanette Cantrell, 5th- and 6th-grade mathematics teacher,
W.R. Castle Memorial Elementary (Johnson County)*

"I do a lot of assessment both verbally and written responses during the year. I model responses during the first semester. I always use the Mike Stevenson rubric: A 2 is complete and correct, a 3 requires students to prove it and a 4 requires polish. For example, I might hold up an item in class and ask if it is opaque, transparent or translucent. A student answers translucent, and I ask someone to make it a 3. The second student would say the object is translucent because you can see through it but it is not clear. I might ask if anyone can polish it. The third answer might add that translucent objects let some light but not all the light pass through. The student adding a definition of translucent or giving examples makes the answer a 4. I encourage my students to elaborate on every response. I want them to become so accustomed to giving me a complete answer and explaining their thoughts on an everyday basis that when testing time comes, it is just normal everyday procedure."

*Sherry Wheeler, science teacher for grades 4, 5 and 6,
Austin Tracy Elementary (Barren County)*

"Never let students answer a question with 'yes' or 'no' or simple number response. Make them tell why or why not. If the first student to respond answers correctly, don't acknowledge the correct answer until you have asked for other opinions. By allowing students to offer other answers, you will receive insight about the misunderstandings in the room. Also, it gives the students practice in explaining why their answer is correct."

*Jeanne Reed, mathematics teacher for grades 5 and 6,
Flat Gap Elementary (Johnson County)*

Providing individualized instruction:

"My job is not the lady who heads the class, but the one who finds the information and makes it real and accessible to the students ... I know all students (and adults for that matter) learn differently, so I spend a lot of time looking for or designing activities to meet the various needs of the students I teach. Sometimes that means I have to depend on others around me. I am not the only voice in my building, and I may not be the one that a particular child responds best to, so I depend on my colleagues a great deal."

*Tonya Carpenter, 4th-grade teacher at Central Elementary
(Johnson County) who also teaches writing in grades 3 and 5*



Teaching Toolkit

Current curriculum documents and other resources for improving instruction in Kentucky public schools are located on the Kentucky Department of Education's Web site.

Program of Studies for Kentucky Schools, Primary – 12

To best understand how the updates to Kentucky's assessment and accountability system will influence classroom instruction, review the "Program of Studies for Kentucky Schools, Primary – 12."

www.education.ky.gov - select "Program of Studies" in the left-hand menu

Core Content for Assessment 4.1

The addition of depth of knowledge indicators to this curriculum document will enable all educators to better understand the level at which Kentucky's Core Content Test items will be written.

www.education.ky.gov - select "Core Content" in the left-hand menu

Kentucky Learning Goals and Academic Expectations

The six learning goals of education reform led to the development of the academic expectations that characterize student achievement of the goals. All Kentucky students are expected to achieve the goals and academic expectations.

www.education.ky.gov - enter KY Learning Goals in the search box in the upper right-hand corner

Combined Curriculum Document

This document identifies the relationships between Kentucky's Academic Expectations, Program of Studies 2006 and the Core Content for Assessment 4.1.

www.education.ky.gov - click on "Teaching Tools" in the left-hand menu

Curriculum Maps

Many districts and schools across the state use curriculum maps to organize teaching, establish a sequence for delivering content and provide a clear scope for what must be taught to all students, based on Kentucky's curriculum documents.

www.education.ky.gov - click on "Teaching Tools" in the left-hand menu

Standards-Based Units of Study

Using standards as the basis for a unit of study focuses planning on meaningful and relevant concepts. The unit plan, in turn, enhances the delivery of instruction and assessment.

www.education.ky.gov - click on "Teaching Tools" in the left-hand menu

Connecting Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment

This Web page offers resources to help districts develop effective instructional planning.

www.education.ky.gov - enter "Connecting Curriculum" in the search box

Kentucky Writing Handbook

The Kentucky Writing Handbook for all grade levels and content areas was revised in 2006. Part I is focused on writing development. Part II is focused on scoring portfolios and is grade-specific.

www.education.ky.gov - enter "Writing Handbook" in the search box

Student Performance Standards

Performance-level descriptors define novice, apprentice, proficient and distinguished expectations for student work in each content area and grade level.

www.education.ky.gov - enter "Student Performance Standards" in the search box

Kentucky Marker Papers (P-12)

This document provides examples of competent student writing across grade levels, content areas and categories of writing.

www.education.ky.gov - enter "Kentucky Marker Papers" in the search box



The new norm-referenced tests

Kentucky legislation requires norm-referenced tests (NRT) to be administered at the elementary, middle and high school levels. They are EXPLORE at grade 8, PLAN at grade 10, the ACT at grade 11 and WorkKeys as an optional test at grades 10, 11 or 12. Districts determined the specific NRT administered at the elementary level and reported results publicly in 2007.

WHAT are these tests?

EXPLORE, PLAN and the ACT are the three assessment programs included in the ACT's Educational Planning and Assessment System (EPAS). EPAS programs test English, mathematics, science and reading knowledge.

- EXPLORE results provide students with academic information that can help them begin making plans for high school coursework and beyond. The EXPLORE test is designed to be developmentally and conceptually linked to those of PLAN and the ACT.
- PLAN and ACT are based on the major areas of high school and postsecondary instructional programs. Performance on these tests has a relationship to a student's academic achievement in postsecondary studies.
- The ACT provides students an indication of college readiness and meets most college admission requirements.
- The WorkKeys assessment measures applied job skills in the areas of communication, problem-solving and interpersonal skills.

WHO takes these tests?

Students in grade 8 will be assessed using EXPLORE. Students in grade 10 will be assessed using PLAN. The ACT will be administered to all grade 11 students.

WorkKeys is optional for students in grades 10, 11 or 12.

WHEN will testing occur?

The EXPLORE and PLAN 2007-08 testing window is Sept. 17-28, 2007. Testing will require two days: one day for students to complete a student career and interest inventory; testing occurs on day two.

Dates will be determined soon for administration of the ACT and WorkKeys tests.

HOW will these tests affect accountability next year and beyond?

- In spring 2008, the ACT will be administered along with a complete Kentucky Core Content Test (KCCT) in Kentucky public high schools. The ACT results will be studied and analyzed. However, the academic index will be based on KCCT results.
- An ACT index, composing 5 percent of high school accountability, will be computed from PLAN, administered to 10th graders, for 2006-07.
- The ACT index, computed from PLAN and ACT results, will count 5 percent of high school accountability in 2007-08 and in the future.
- For 2008-09, the ACT will be augmented with KCCT items. A Kentucky scale combining ACT/KCCT items to be used in calculating an academic index for accountability will be applied in 2008-09 and from that point forward.
- Inclusion of EXPLORE results in CATS accountability is under study at this time.
- Students meeting the WorkKeys threshold established by Workforce Development will earn Kentucky Employability Certificates and count toward nonacademic values.

WHY give these tests?

Kentucky is using EXPLORE, PLAN and the ACT in combination to focus on meeting academic standards across the entire secondary school core program of studies.

These assessments will be helpful in measuring student achievement, for gauging students' readiness to transition to the next level of learning and for school program evaluation.

Links to EXPLORE and PLAN handbooks and interpretive guides can be found on the Kentucky Department of Education Web site. Go to www.education.ky.gov and enter "EXPLORE handbook" in the search box in the upper right-hand corner. Click on the "downloads" link to access both assessment handbooks and interpretive guides.

Alternate assessment, CATS Online and other accommodations

In Kentucky, all students, regardless of their diverse learning needs, are included in state assessment. Students with disabilities and other learning needs are assessed using accommodations and other modifications that are part of their regular classroom instruction throughout the school year. Accommodations help reduce the effect of the disability and allow students to show their knowledge and skills

WHAT is alternate assessment?

The Alternate Assessment is designed for the 1 percent of the student population for whom traditional assessments, even with modifications, would be an inappropriate measure of progress. It offers students with the most significant cognitive disabilities an alternate to the regular state assessments. It is aligned to Kentucky's Academic Expectations and linked to grade-level expectations so that these students can be assessed in the same content areas as general education students according to grade level.

The Alternate Assessment has three major components:

KY Alternate Portfolio Revised (P) – The reading, mathematics and science portfolio is merged with instruction in grades 3-8, 10 and 11.

KY Attainment Tasks (AT) - Similar to instructional activities in social studies, arts and humanities, practical living/vocational studies and writing, the AT is completed in grades 4, 5, 7, 8, 10, 11 and 12.

Transition Attainment Record (TAR) – The TAR is a rating scale in English, mathematics, science and reading. The Admission and Release Committee (ARC) completes the TAR in grades 8, 10 and 11. It is designed as a readiness measure, like EPAS.

WHAT is CATS Online?

The CATS Online assessment provides eligible students with disabilities or limited English proficiency (LEP) a way to take portions of the Kentucky Core Content Test online. The online testing schedule mirrors the traditional testing schedule.

WHAT accommodations are used?

Many students in special populations would be unable to participate in the assessment without special accommodations such as personal readers, scribes, extended time, paraphrasing, use of special technology and equipment and/or interpreters.

WHO can participate?

Students who are qualified by their ARC may participate in the alternate assessment provided the participation guidelines have been met. Students in special populations must meet the required criteria to be eligible to take the CATS online.

HOW are the scores used?

The scores of the alternate assessment and CATS Online factor into the school accountability indices in each of the seven content areas covered by the general assessment.

MORE INFO ...

Alternate Portfolio State Summary – go to www.education.ky.gov and click on "KDE QuickLinks" in the left-hand menu. Select "Alternate Portfolio" from the list.

Kentucky Alternate Assessment Program Web site – www.ihsd.uky.edu/kap

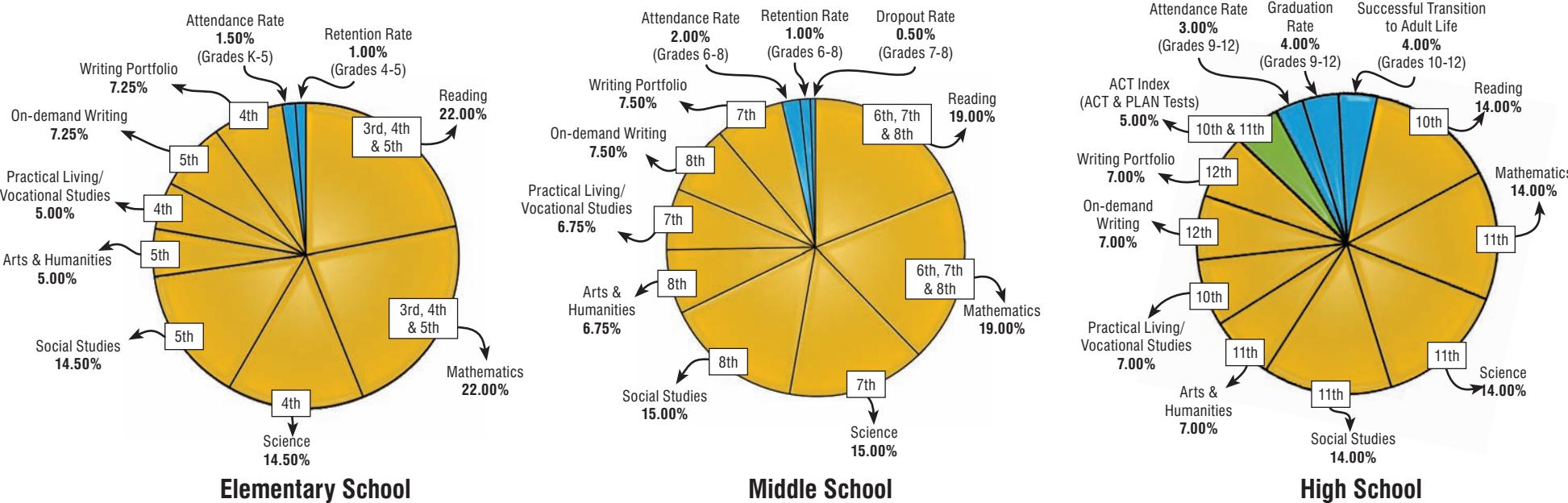
Alternate Assessment Administration Guide 2006 includes Components Chart – <http://education.ky.gov/JumpTo/?jump=AltAssessment>

Online Implementation Guide (scroll to "Section 11, Alternate Assessments") – <http://education.ky.gov/JumpTo/?jump=CATSImplGuide>

Alternate Assessment Portfolio: Overview of Grade Level Requirements – <http://education.ky.gov/JumpTo/?jump=AltAssessApxA>

CATS Online assessment – <http://education.ky.gov/JumpTo/?jump=CATSOnline>

Commonwealth Accountability Testing System (CATS) Weights



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that has Internet access.

Facilitators of the course have strong backgrounds and experience with these issues. The course includes a one-hour online professional development orientation and 11 hours of content and activities. Participants are eligible to receive 12 hours of Effective Instructional Leadership Act (EILA) credit.

Casey Hamilton is a school counselor at Whitesville Elementary (Daviess County). She said she took the course during the 2007 spring session because she had been faced more this year than any other with situations involving sexual assault, domestic violence and child abuse.

"I knew I needed to educate myself in order to help the students who come to me with these problems," Hamilton said. "I can now better understand the cycle of abuse and why victims often stay with their abusers."

She said educators need to be aware of the signs of abuse and how to handle reporting a claim of abuse, as well as what they are legally obligated to do. She said it is important to be able to better understand how people fall into these situations and why they sometimes stay in these situations.

According to research, school is a safe haven for many students. Last year in Kentucky, there were more than 30,000 cases of substantiated child abuse and neglect involving nearly 42,000 children. According to the Cabinet for Health and Family Services, more than 80 percent of the reports name parents as the perpetrators

domestic violence or child abuse. The National Survey of Child and Adolescent Well-Being found that children placed in out-of-home care due to abuse or neglect tended to score lower than the general population on measures of cognitive capacity, language development and academic achievement.

The cycle of violence can be far-reaching. Young victims range in age from infants to teenagers and come from every level of society and every ethnic group.

"In light of the fact that so many children are impacted either directly or indirectly," Rist said, "it is important for teachers and paraprofessionals to understand that there are many services available to students and their families."

Susan Brown is a counselor at Williamsburg High School (Williamsburg Independent). She recently completed the spring session course and found the resources in this class to be "phenomenal."

"I have wanted to view every video, watch every PowerPoint and read all the sources. I have printed myself a notebook of all the readings," Brown said. "I liked the chats and opportunity to discuss online with postings."

Hamilton, the counselor from Whitesville Elementary, agrees. "The most helpful part of the course was learning from my (online) colleagues through the discussion links we were assigned with each unit," she said. "I also gained helpful insight from the PowerPoint presentations and the Web site links that were available to us throughout the course."

The resources and materials for the course were developed through a collaboration of statewide agencies. The Kentucky Department of Education worked to design the course with the Kentucky Association of Sexual Assault Programs, the Kentucky Domestic Violence Association, Prevent Child Abuse Kentucky, the Kentucky Association of Child Advocacy Centers and the Division of Child Abuse and Domestic Violence Services in the Cabinet for Health and Family Services.

Previous participants in the course

have come from all levels of school administration including assistant superintendents, directors of pupil personnel, principals, school counselors and a special education paraprofessional. Rist said this indicates that many schools recognize that everyone must take a role in nurturing students who face unthinkable situations away from school.

Leigh Williams agrees. She is a migrant family service worker at Camargo Elementary (Montgomery County). Her role in the school is to help migrant students and



Leigh Williams, migrant family service worker at Camargo Elementary (Montgomery County), spends time at the computer finding resources for migrant students and their families and also works one-on-one with adults and children to help resolve problems that interfere with a student's adjustment to school.

their families resolve personal, emotional and social problems that interfere with a student's adjustment to school.

She took the online course to meet the continuing education requirements of her clinical social worker license and said she found the information to be very pertinent to her job.

"Anyone who works with children or youth should be aware of these issues because there will be a time when one will need to help a student," Williams said.

Kentucky education leaders using the "rigor and relevance framework" in their schools have stressed that relationships between and among students, educators and parents are key to student success. They believe every student is entitled to ongoing relationships with caring adults who place high priorities on helping students reach their learning goals.

"As educators address the 'Three Rs of a 21st Century Education: Rigor, Relevance and Relationships,'" Rist said, "this professional development course can be used as a tool to provide educators and paraprofessionals with awareness and intervention



Photo by Lora Wimsatt, Daviess County Public Schools

Casey Hamilton, school counselor at Whitesville Elementary (Daviess County), calls on what she learned from the online course, "Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence and Child Abuse: Awareness and Intervention," as she talks with a student.

of the abuse or neglect.

"Statistics show that nearly all school professionals, at some point in their careers, will be called upon to help in a child abuse, neglect and/or family violence situation," Rist said. "Their appropriate response and action can save a child from further abuse and will help a child understand that he or she is not to blame."

Regardless of academic achievements, socioeconomic status or grade level, a student is impacted by the devastating experience of childhood sexual assault,

skills in reporting and reducing the harmful effects of interpersonal violence, thus reducing barriers to learning."

The next "Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence and Child Abuse: Awareness and Intervention" course will be offered during the KVHS summer session, June 20-Aug. 8. Registration begins May 7 and closes June 8.

Registration for the fall 2007 session is Aug. 6-Sept. 7. The course begins Sept. 19 and runs through Nov. 7.

MORE INFO ...

Mary Jo Rist, (502) 564-4772, maryjo.rist@education.ky.gov

Bob Fortney, KVHS, (502) 564-4772, bob.fortney@education.ky.gov

Kentucky Virtual High School, www.kvhs.org - Click on "professional development and collaboration" elearningkyinquiry@education.ky.gov, (866) 432-0008, Ext. 4551

www.education.ky.gov - Click on "KDE QuickLinks" in the left hand list. Scroll down to "e-Learning" and click.



Photo by Tim Thornberry, Education Cabinet

Colorful backdrop to learning

Debbie Murphy, an instructional assistant at Foster Heights Elementary (Nelson County), uses manipulatives to help Rheanna Carter practice a mathematics skill during in-school Extended School Services in front of a large, colorful map of the United States. Students at the school participate in targeted one-on-one or small group interventions during the ESS sessions.

BOARD from Page 1

Minority Superintendent program

The board also heard an update on the Minority Superintendent Internship Program (MSIP). The program is designed to help identify and train a pool of highly qualified minority superintendent candidates for Kentucky's school districts.

Former MSIP participants, Superintendents Elaine Farris (Shelby County) and Diane Woods (Campbellsville Independent), told the board how the program enabled them to secure their superintendent positions and opened doors to opportunities.

The current recruitment cycle for MSIP is open through May 25. (See article on Page 11.)

High school athletics

The board agreed to re-designate the Kentucky High School Athletics Association (KHSAA) as its agent to manage high school athletics. In addition, the board took action on a number of proposals presented by KHSAA, including passage of Proposal 2. This measure would create "athletic territories" for private schools, similar to those imposed on public schools.

As amended by the board, the proposal stipulates that athletes who transfer from a public middle school to a private high school – or from a private middle school to a public high school – would be ineligible to play for a year, but could practice with their teams. If approved by a legislative panel, the new rule could be in place for the 2008-09 school year. A public hearing on the proposed changes will be May 31 at 10 a.m. in Frankfort.

Other actions

The 2006 General Assembly allocated \$75.1 million each year of 2006-08 biennium to fund the Kentucky Preschool Program. Based on this amount, the board approved the per-child rates for the 2007-08 school year and the mid-year growth amount. These rates will provide extra funds for districts experiencing more than a 5 percent

growth based on the Dec. 1, 2007, count.

The board also gave final approval to revisions made to several regulations for special education programs. Kentucky must amend these regulations to comply with new federal regulations. The revisions are a result of input received from several advisory groups and guidance from the U.S. Department of Education.

A public hearing will be held on these regulations in Frankfort on May 31 at 10 a.m. More information on participating in the public hearing can be found on the department's Web site at www.education.ky.gov.

Commissioner search

The board met in special session April 15 and 16 to interview finalists for the position of Kentucky's commissioner of education. The three finalists are Mitchell Chester, Ed.D., a senior associate state superintendent for the Ohio Department of Education's Office of Policy and Accountability; Barbara Erwin, Ed.D., superintendent of St. Charles Community Unit District 303 schools in Illinois; and Richard La Pointe, Ph.D., a deputy assistant secretary for the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Vocational and Adult Education.

The board met again April 24 to further discuss the finalists. The board will hold its annual retreat May 9 and 10 in Bowling Green. The next regular board meeting will be June 13 and 14 in Frankfort.

MORE INFO ...

www.education.ky.gov - Click on "KDE QuickLinks" in the left-hand list. Scroll down to "State Board of Education" and click for state board information.

- Click on "Administrative Resources" in the menu across the top of the page and then select "Legal and Legislative Services" in the left-hand menu for public hearing information.

2007 from Page 1

the transfer of records among school districts and schools. (HB 145)

High school athletics: Permits a student to participate in high school athletics even though the student becomes 19 years of age before Aug. 1, if the student qualified for exceptional children services and had an individual education program developed by an admissions and release committee (ARC) while the student was enrolled in the primary school program; was retained in the primary school program because of an ARC committee recommendation; and has not completed four consecutive years or eight consecutive semesters of eligibility following initial promotion from grade 8 to grade 9. (HB 380)

School boards

Local school board members: Increases the maximum annual amount of per diem to \$3,000 and the maximum annual expenses for which local school board members can be reimbursed to \$3,000. Includes a local school board member in the definition of employee as it relates to the state health insurance plan. Requires a local school board to adopt policies or regulations that upon request of a local school board member to the board, shall provide for deductions from per diem and actual expenses payments for membership dues, health insurance purchases, scholarship funds and contributions to a political action committee. (HB 50)

School districts

Guaranteed energy savings contract: Exempts a local school district from seeking approval from the commissioner of education to enter a guaranteed energy savings contract that does not involve construction or the installation of physical improvements and to exempt the contract from other provisions of KRS 45A.352. (HB 145)

Charitable gaming: Makes omnibus changes relating to charitable gaming. Requires all licensed charitable organizations that have annual gross receipts of \$200,000 or less and do not have a weekly bingo session to report to the office annually, as opposed to reporting quarterly in accordance with regulations. Requires a letter of warning for violations that are not willful prior to any other administrative action. Authorizes the Office of Charitable Gaming to audit quarterly reports for up to four years from filing. Provides for a fee adjustment process on Oct. 1 of each odd-numbered year. (HB 156)

School bus operation: Defines the term "cellular telephone." Prohibits the use of cellular telephone by a school bus driver on any highway while the bus is in motion and transporting one or more children, except for communications made to and from a central dispatch, school transportation department or its equivalent when the bus is not equipped with a functioning two-way radio. Provides an exception for emergencies. Establishes a \$50 fine for the first offense and, for a subsequent offense, \$100 and suspension of the school bus endorsement for a period of six months. (HB 230)

Nonresident student contracts: Identifies academic performance and the impact on programs, school facilities, transportation and staffing of the districts as factors to be considered by the commissioner of education and the Kentucky Board of Education if local districts cannot agree on a

nonresident student contract and file an appeal. (HB 285)

State minimum wage: Increases the state minimum hourly wage to \$5.85 an hour on the effective date of this act, to \$6.55 an hour effective July 1, 2008, and to \$7.25 an hour effective July 1, 2009; and to the federal minimum wage rate if the rate exceeds the state minimum wage rate. Amends various statutes relating to the Kentucky Economic Development Finance Authority incentive program to allow approved companies to use the current federal minimum wage, until July 1, 2008, as their base hourly wage calculation. (HB 305)

Construction: Defines terms relating to construction contracts. Specifies certain provisions that make a construction contract null, void and unenforceable. Establishes time limits for payments to a contractor or a subcontractor. Requires a local board of education to make payment to a contractor within 45 business days following receipt of a timely, properly completed, undisputed request for payment. Requires the Department of Education to notify the district of determination within 10 business days including the day upon which the request is received. Requires the local board failing to make the timely payment to pay 12 percent per annum on the unpaid amount beginning on the 46th day. Requires the contractor to pay a subcontractor within 15 business days after receipt of payment by the contractor or to pay 12 percent interest on the unpaid amount. Caps retainage at 10 percent until 50 percent of the project is completed and caps retainage at 5 percent on the remainder. Requires release of retainage less an amount equal to 200 percent of the contracting entity's reasonably estimated cost of the balance of a contractor's or subcontractor's obligated, yet uncompleted, work remaining, within 30 days of substantial completion of a project. Requires the contractor to pay a subcontractor within 15 business days after receipt of payment by the contractor or to pay 12 percent interest on the unpaid amount.

Caps retainage at 10 percent until 50 percent of the project is completed and caps retainage at 5 percent on the remainder. Requires release of retainage less an amount equal to 200 percent of the contracting entity's reasonably estimated cost of the balance of a contractor's or subcontractor's obligated, yet uncompleted, work remaining, within 30 days of substantial completion of a project. Makes provisions applicable to both public and private construction, but exempts residential construction. Specifies that court costs and attorney fees shall be awarded to the prevailing party in a dispute if the losing party is deemed to have acted in bad faith. Makes provisions effective for contracts entered into after the effective date of the act. (HB 490)

Awareness of Crohn's Disease: Urges awareness of Crohn's disease and the special access needs of those living with the condition. (HCR 141)

Confirmation

Confirms the gubernatorial appointment of Judith H. Gibbons to the Kentucky Board of Education representing the Sixth Supreme Court District for a term ending April 14, 2010. (HCR 26)

Collaboration

Urges collaborative community endeavors between the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Education and the Kentucky Community and Technical College System. (HR 156)

STEM

Urges the Council on Postsecondary Education (CPE) to continue the work of the CPE Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Task Force in developing strategies to improve Kentucky's performance in the science, technology, engineering, and mathematics disciplines. (SR 241, HR 224)

Leadership Letter



Photo by Tim Thornberry, Education Cabinet

Crossroads for global connections

As students at Anne Mason Elementary change classes, Principal Leah Riney, center, stands in the main hallway of the Scott County school with visiting education leaders from Bosnia-Herzegovina, Enver Hamzic, left, president of the Arnauti School PTA; Amir Zukic, director of Hamzo Humo, Babino; Jeff Summey, director NGO Most Prijateljstva za BiH; and Mahir Arnaut, director of Arnauti. Summey, a Kentucky native, has been serving in Bosnia for five years. He brought the education leaders from two K-8 schools in the Babino Valley to learn more about how schools use technology in teaching and learning, about school management in the state and about how public schools work with English as a Second Language learners. The group toured Kentucky public schools in Scott and Jefferson counties at the invitation of the Kentucky Department of Education, met with department staff and with educators at the University of Louisville and toured the University of Kentucky to help promote better cultural understanding.

Compiled by Rebecca Blessing
rebecca.blessing@education.ky.gov

Nonacademic index calculations change

Starting this school year, the nonacademic index component of the Commonwealth Accountability Testing System (CATS) will be calculated differently for determining school accountability. The Kentucky Board of Education made changes to the state education regulation that contains the formula for determining school accountability. Weights for the nonacademic index at all three levels were reduced slightly and weights for the seven assessed content areas were slightly increased. (See pie charts for accountability weights on Page 8.)

Changes in nonacademic index calculations include:

- Beginning in 2008-09, the graduation rate at the high school level will reflect retention and dropout data and will be calculated as required by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. Kentucky values will be added to the graduation rate as follows:
 - students receiving Certificates of Attainment (1 point)
 - students graduating by age 21 (1 point)
 - student completing a secondary GED (0.5 point)
 - students graduating in three years or less as defined in the student's Individual

ual Learning Plan will earn an additional 0.5 point for a total of 1.5 points

- High school nonacademic data will include transition to adult life data; beginning in 2008-09, the values for transition to adult life will be based on those graduates who:
 - complete an Individual Learning Plan (ILP)
 - meet or exceed the ACT benchmarks set by the Council on Postsecondary Education
 - indicate a work force or military career path on their ILP and earn a silver level Kentucky Employability Certificate; or
 - meet or exceed the transition criteria for the Kentucky Certificate of Attainment, divided by twice the number of graduates

- A bonus point will be added to the transition to adult life calculation for each graduate who:
 - passes three Advanced Placement exams with scores of three or greater
 - receives an International Baccalaureate Diploma
 - receives a Commonwealth Diploma
 - receives a National Merit Finalist designation
 - has an ILP that indicates a work force or military career path and who earns a gold level Kentucky Employability Certificate, a Kentucky Occupational Skill Standards Certificate or national industry certification

- Bonus points will be added to the base

transition to adult life calculation and be capped at 100.

Calculations remain unchanged for the attendance rate at all levels, the retention rate at elementary and middle school levels, and the dropout rate at middle school.

To meet their individual accountability goals, high schools still must meet the criteria for novice reduction and dropout rate.

The nonacademic data for the current year's accountability index is scheduled for release in late May by the Kentucky Department of Education.

Minority superintendent interns sought

Educators are being sought for the Minority Superintendent Internship Program.

These interns will work closely with successful Kentucky superintendents to gain practical experience with curriculum/assessment/instruction issues, labor relations,

human resources, facility management, finance and budgeting as well as public relations. The yearlong program begins in late June.

Applicants should hold, or be close to fulfilling, superintendent certification. Interested educators may request an application packet from the Division of Educator Quality and Diversity, (502) 564-1479. Applications are due by May 25.

Student Information System: the next generation

Implementation of the next generation student information system (SIS) for each of the state's 175 school districts and 55 area technology centers (ATCs) is underway.

The first phase includes 19 districts that will participate in the pilot program. Once the pilot is completed, the rest of the districts and ATCs will begin implementation. Groups will be phased in over a three-year period.

The new SIS is designed so that users can enter information once and use it again and again throughout the district. District personnel also will be able to undertake real-time or historical data analysis to assist in making decisions. The system will include a secure portal for parent/guardian access to real-time information, such as attendance, grades, assignments and upcoming events, about each student.

Infinite Campus will provide and

manage the SIS. The company, headquartered in Minnesota, will provide applications, hardware, resources and support to all Kentucky school districts and ATCs.

Staff training opportunities

Two training opportunities are being offered this summer for classified staff.

The Kentucky Institute for Classified Staff will provide bus drivers, custodians, school-based secretaries and food service personnel with information to help them understand their specific roles on the school team. Participants in the institute also will receive an overview of safety procedures to help reduce unsafe practices for staff and students.

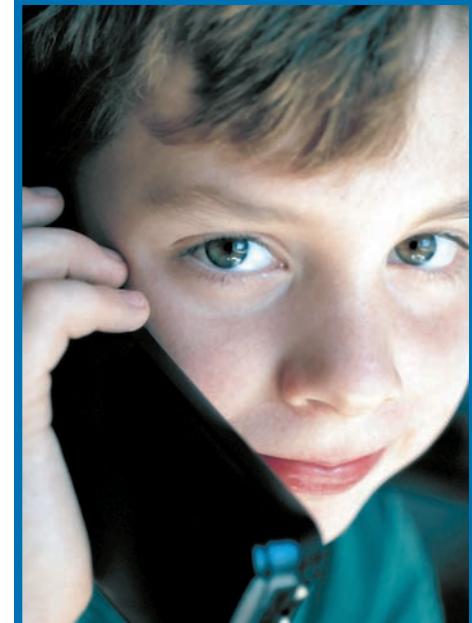
The institute will be held June 29 at Eastern Kentucky University.

Contact: Tamara Tatum, (877) 805-4277, ttatum@uky.edu

The 2007 Paraeducator Academy is scheduled June 11-12 in Louisville. Presenters from across Kentucky will share ideas and strategies for working in the classroom and partnering with teachers and students. Up to 12 hours professional development credit is available. Registration is due June 1.

Contact: Barbara Locker, (859) 519-7374, blocker@uky.edu

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Arts bloom each spring in Owensboro

By Faun S. Fishback
 faun.fishback@education.ky.gov

Dance, play, sing, listen, act, paint, create and enjoy! Those are the seeds planted eight years ago by the Owensboro (Independent) School Board to grow the district's art program. In this district with nearly 68 percent of its student population participating in the free- and reduced-meals program, the board wanted to make certain schools were providing a wide variety of opportunities for students to participate in classroom and extra-curricular arts activities.

To make sure the program was properly cultivated, the board created the position for a fine and performing arts curriculum specialist. Julie White was hired to work in every district school to develop and foster all areas of the arts – instrumental (band and orchestra) and choral music, visual arts, drama and dance.

One of the first things White did was ask principals, arts and humanities teachers and physical education teachers, who teach dance, to help create a way to showcase talented students and the work they were doing in school. A second-semester, five-night arts festival sprouted from the district-wide arts collaboration.

The festival was designed to provide a week of free entertainment for families and the community, some who would not normally attend such events, at RiverPark Center in Owensboro. Students in every school could attend the arts showcase and be inspired by the performances and exhibits. Students would get experience performing on a professional stage.

The spring arts festival has helped get more and more Owensboro Independent students, preschool through high school, involved in the arts and humanities classes and after-school programs like drama, marching band, select choruses and visual arts classes, White said. Approximately 1,500 students – more than one-third of the students in the district – performed or had their art displayed during the Arts in Bloom 2007 festival.



Photos by Julie Ellis, Owensboro Independent Public Schools

Volunteer Myron McLain, at left, helps Andrew Dube, a member of the Owensboro 5-6 Center Orchestra, tune his violin before the group's performance at the Arts in Bloom festival earlier this spring. Above, Jeanetta Owsley, left, Kayla Kelley, Travis Lane, Dillon Cobb, Jermaine Ashley and John Mitchell perform with the Owensboro High School Band. Bands from 5th grade through high school and the high school wind ensemble were featured entertainment one evening of the weeklong arts festival. One night was devoted to performances by orchestra students.

Students are graded on their classroom content work as they prepare for an art exhibit or a performance. The festival offers a real-world opportunity to spotlight student achievement. "Students love to be on stage, and parents love to see their children performing on a 'real' stage," White said.

A testament to the district arts curriculum and the spring culminating event is the growth students at all levels have shown on state assessments in arts and humanities content. Since 2000, district arts and humanities results on the Kentucky Core Content Tests have increased from 45.98 to 68.05. Between 2001 and 2006, the number of novice students in this content area has been cut in half.

In addition, the district's partnership with RiverPark Center has provided drama students with opportunities to work with Broadway touring companies and participate in theater-related internships at home and in New York. The district's Rose Curtain Players will perform this summer in Scotland.

The Owensboro Public School Chorus was selected to make a performance training tape for a national touring company of "Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat," which was launched from RiverPark Center. The tape was used with young performers selected for the play's children's chorus in each city on the tour.

MORE INFO ...

Julie White, fine and performing arts curriculum specialist, (270) 686-1000, julie.white@owensboro.kyschools.us

"The availability and exposure to the arts has opened so many doors for our students," White said. "More students are exploring the arts, finding success and making career choices in the arts."



Hager Preschool student Ashton Baxter, center photo, straightens classmate Ryan Crabtree's bow tie before they appeared as Mickey Mouse Club members during a dance performance that was part of an evening of "Dancin' with Disney." Above, Londun Randolph, left, Betsy Griffith, Sarah Holbrook, Kalynn Parham, Alexa Swihart and Andreya Williams take a bow after their performance with the Owensboro High School Chorus during the evening of the spring festival devoted to vocal performances. At right, Pirate Will Stone and his shipmates head backstage at the RiverPark Center. The Owensboro Middle School drama students sang and danced to the "Dead Man's Chest Montage" from "Pirates of the Caribbean II."

